

Administered Persons: The Engineering of Souls

It is extremely difficult, as the history of recorded thought and action shows, to frame correctly the questions or problems of human freedom and control. The correct or proper framing of the question is almost surely precedent to a proper, correct, or adequate set of answers. And such a set of answers is almost surely a necessary but not sufficient precedent to the arrangement or rearrangement of life, at least informed by, if not fully formed according to, the answers reached.

I draw to your attention that the whole paragraph above not only presupposes that the problem is a meaningful (and important) problem, but that I have already assumed what I take to be obvious, i.e., that the arrangement or rearrangement of life is, at least to some degree and in some sense and under some circumstances, possible, and that therefore it is possible to a degree to exert control so as to enhance freedom, and, indeed, that the enhancement can be had in no other way.

I should not go on without disposing of—or at least noting—two holdings which, if they do not dispense with the problem altogether, set it upon so different a footing that what I want to talk about might well, on these holdings, be demonstrably pointless. One holding is that of radical determinism: the view that every event, or state, or entity is fully determined—not merely circumscribed, but wholly shaped, nothing excluded—by antecedent events, circumstances, and conditions, so that, given the initial state of the cosmos, all inevitably follows. What has been must have been, what is must be, and what will be is already (albeit latently) there now in what has been and what is. The conversation in which we are now engaged is, on the theory (for this theory includes its own metatheory), included in the view; and thus whatever we say or think about freedom and control is fully pre-decided—this moment was, like the Word, there from before ever the world began—and, hence, if the term makes any sense, “nonsense.” Of course it makes no sense, because sense and nonsense are on this view indistinguishable, and judgment is a null category (since judgment presup-

poses freedom)—all these things are just there. One might be tempted (though that term has no standing in a radical determinist view) to abandon the discussion (recognize, though, that we have, on the view, no choice in the matter) as *idle* (though everything—or nothing—then equally merits that adjective). There is even a sense in which—by preemption—one cannot quarrel with the view of radical determinism, because on the very view itself, the quarrel, the terms of the quarrel, and the outcome are all predetermined—i.e., the quarrel is not only futile but cannot exist, since the warrant for intentionality which is essential to the very idea of a quarrel has been preemptively excluded from intellectual—or indeed ontological—status.

I know the question is difficult, the literature on free will and associated problems is voluminous; so I propose to make only a few observations on the radical determinist view and leave it at that. First, it is, as I have intimated, beyond discussion, since it excludes what is necessarily presupposed for discussion (freedom, judgment, the possibility of changing your mind). Second, I believe that while the words can be said, they cannot really be believed. No one I know who makes statements as to the logical necessity of belief in radical determinism expects or hopes that he will be responded to by others as though those very statements were wholly determined. Indeed, even in the internal conversation, by which such a person comes to the view, and by continued internal argumentation maintains it, we see, empirically, an “I” *assuming* itself to be a free agent addressing a “me” whom it is trying to convince that it is *not* a free agent. (It cannot be believed in the same sense that one cannot “really” believe that one does not in any sense exist. It is not merely a matter of grammar, though that is important—or even, perhaps, psychology. Belief presupposes existence and discussion presupposes something short of radical determinism.) It is worth noting, moreover, that the feeling of (or belief in) a radical or very extended determinedness is often accompanied by panic, correctly intuited as prodromal to a collapse of the personality, by a vivid sense of advancing “nervous breakdown,” or a sense of the

annunciation of the advent of insanity. Further, belief or no, no one has been found able to conduct his life upon such a belief: first, because the very notion or possibility of "conducting" one's life is *a priori* excluded; second, because such abandonment of conducting one's life would be (freely or otherwise) viewed by others as a sign of sickness or a reprehensible betrayal of responsibility, and would lead indeed to a great deal more "determinism" in the believer's life, but of such a kind, for the most part, as to militate against the believer and the belief's survival in the evolutionary process. Not that such proclamations have no effect. The only sustained and dogmatic proclaimed holder of such views whom I knew intimately—the late great psychologist of Toronto, Bill Blatz—used the argument selectively, and perhaps wittingly, perhaps not, as an enormously advantageous social-psychological-political-economic ploy which, in its outcome, maximized the holder's freedom and minimized the freedom of others, while increasing radically their dependence upon if not determination by him. Thus, he systematically insisted on others' adherence to the doctrine, as a condition for even their access to his Presence, for their children's right to benefit from his ministrations, and for bestowal of his praise, recognition, attention, and approval. He extorted from (or imposed upon) *parents* the view that their children's behavior was wholly determined, hence beyond good or evil, praise or blame, or justifiable (the word has no meaning here) punishment or reward, a mere inevitable outcome of a chain of causality reaching back to before all time and forward to beyond all eternity. Having imposed these views upon parents, or cajoled or coerced their assent, he would treat any retreat from the dogma as wanton backsliding to be reprehended as well as punished, upon his considered decision, if necessary by excluding child and parent alike from the presumed benefits of his ministrations and belief-maintenance efforts.

Such views I thus believe to be not seriously (or even literally) tenable. They are advanced in the service generally, as in the particular case above, of the institution, legitimation, and effective-assertion-by-verbal-denial of control to be concentrated in a mandarin-elite. They are propaganda for, but insofar as believed constitute, a partition or a repartition of freedom and control respectively between persons or classes of persons.

The other view that, if it does not rule out the kinds of questions I want to explore, appears at least to trivialize them, is the transcendent view, if also taken with radical and serious immediacy. The view holds, roughly, in one version—its Western version—that freedom lies only in total abandonment into sole and whole obedience to the will of God, the God indeed Whose service *is* (and alone is) perfect freedom. In the Eastern transcendent version freedom in its only intelligible or non-illusory sense is freedom from the bond to the wheel of life: freedom, that is, from desire, even

the desire to be desireless. Freedom is and is only where duality is not, and non-duality lies at the end of a long path whose beginning is marked by the stilling of the ever-chattering mind and the diminution, dissipation, and death of desire. Let me leave these views in semi-suspension for now, making only a few remarks so that a possible avenue for reconnection may still lie open after I have explored my main topic. Let me merely observe, for now, that a sophisticated incarnational theology, requiring obedience (which is then indeed service and freedom) to the divine in each and every man and all men, makes central the problem of freedom and control, takes freedom (in some sense) as its presupposition, and elevates and enshrines it in the pantheon of goods. The second doctrine may also be found not only not to be contradictory to the first, but both to mark the way (or a way) to the god within, a consistent characterization of what we may hope to discover: the *summa* of the "negative theology," the Non-Dual. It is also and obviously a badly needed countervailing mandate to turn from the idolatry that is central to Western culture, and culminative in our era, i.e., the worship of "control" in a special, and specially catastrophic, sense.

Having said something about radical determinism as being both untenable and a propaganda ploy for a particular program of control, let me say briefly that the same holds true, though less obviously, for a doctrine of radical voluntarism. Whatever denies circumscription by circumstance, whatever exaggerates the voluntary or pleads the impossible ("bootstrap" operations, for instance), whatever concentrates excessively on agent, neglecting agency (means at hand), background, act-in-progress (history, life-history, development, evolution), conduces to the psychology, philosophy, and actuality of "blaming the victim," since the virtual holding is that persons do (since they may do anything without let or hindrance) what they want, that they are what they are and where they are and how they are entirely by choice, that therefore between real and practical ideal there is neither distance nor difference, that *laissez-faire* has then no superior principle, that its outcome calls for no remediation, and that if actions have no conditions (or virtually none) problems of justice or compassion or love (*caritas*, *agapé*) do not arise. Again, probably, no one is really able to believe any such thing, let alone act upon it, but the doctrine, slightly diluted, marks the turn of political stance in the last few years, the change in political atmosphere, which the advent of President Nixon signalized and signified at the beginning of this decade in the United States.

Between these poles, both really inconceivable and untenable, and both of which appear to render meaningless the problems of freedom and control, the true philosophical, ethical, political, and practical problems of freedom and control arise, flow out of history, pose themselves for solution or resolution, are momentarily

solved, resolved, or absolved, and flow back into history, only to cry anew for reformulation and new address, at the very risk that wrong answers may indeed spell history's end. We seem to be at one such turning-point now. One signal given, arresting in its boldness, was evidenced by the announcement and rapid promulgation of Seymour Martin Lipset's doctrine—his ideology—that history had now brought us to the end of ideology, reducing all problems essentially to administration or management, and, incidentally, therefore, enthroning the administrators-managers (represented by him, by the Galbraiths, the Moynihans, the Haldemans and Ehrlichmans as the new elite, with or without cardboard front figures like Agnew or Nixon).

Even for people like us—some teachers, some parents, some psychotherapists—all, I suppose, practitioners or would-be practitioners and theorists of the liberative arts, it is still difficult to state satisfactorily the problems of freedom and control within our art, our artistry, or our artifacts, even when we see in a child's uplighted eyes, quickened breath, flush of triumphant insight or achievement, the sign that our intuition surely tells us is the sign of his surge, delighted, into some new-found freedom. Often enough, but not often enough to be definitive for the issue, the achievement of our child's (or pupil's, or patient's, or client's, or friend's) freedom lies in the removal (by us, by the child, by the child with our aid) of some unnecessary, unwarranted, or inimical control. The control may lie "outside" the child—the unhampered activities of a school bully or the restraints of an unreasonable school rule—or it may lie within him, a fancied fear, which warmth and support could bring to evanescence. Here the road to "freedom from"—momentarily neglecting problems of "freedom for"—lies along the sign-posts pointing "de-control." The removal of the control is necessary to and sometimes sufficient for the freedom. (It goes without saying that this may and generally will involve the control of someone else in some way: the school bully or the foolish rule-makers.) But also, as we know in the quite general case, every freedom, even for the same person, is gained by the exercise somehow, somewhere, of some control. Escape, for instance, into the vast territories of freedom that literature both represents and opens up depends all too obviously on the acquisition (note the word!) of the complex controls necessary to enter, let alone to enjoy it. One might—indeed one soon does—run into the difficult problem as to whether, and if so by what methods and to what degree, we may impose the required controls. In certain situations the problem is whether and how it is permissible or mandatory to control the child into acquiring the controls that will give him the freedom, if the alternative is his loss of all those freedoms that, at least in principle, literacy permits. Historically, teachers and other well-wishers used to have no hesitation in beating children (controlling them) so as to *force* them to *acquire*

enough facility with Latin, enough *freedom* in the use of it readily to read and freely to apprehend Roman Literature and History in the original, so that thus and by further controls, imposed if necessary, they might read out the historical lessons that would eventually qualify them to be relatively free governors instead of relatively unfree subjects. One of the interesting empirical facts of British educational history is that in schools where Latin and Greek were *not* taught, beatings were not held to be as freely justified or necessary. But then, of course, those schools did not turn out governors but subjects. Stern teachers could thus regard themselves, with seemingly sufficient warrant, not as tyrants but as liberators. Truly docile ("teachable") pupils could believe, after the event if not before or at the time, that their punishment (especially if it led to the introjection of the necessary controls, and if those controls paid off) was or had been "for their own good." If today we no longer so freely or frequently beat them, but rather seduce them, or manipulate the group against them, or withhold love or approval, the form is the same: we ensure the child's control so that, presumably, he can enjoy a later freedom. Clearly, we have here a whole list of unresolved problems as to what is permissible if and when a child will not acquire a present control that is credibly a condition for an important later freedom.

We have an even more difficult problem when it is *not* clear that the control in question leads to a desirable freedom (a freedom from or a freedom to or for), when, instead, it leads to a freedom that, from at least some vital viewpoint, is at best a dubious good. If, for instance, a child wants with our aid to acquire the controls that would enable him to mask his hostility and to show a fawning face, so as to escape punishment by a tyrannical principal, or parent; or if he wants with our aid to acquire the controls that would help him conform, against inclination, to arbitrary and unreasonable peer demands (even to the point of denying the emerging self's integrity), is it permissible—or mandatory if he so wishes—to help him acquire such controls? Or may we, should we, must we help the child acquire the controls that would enable him freely to become himself the tyrant?

Difficult as these questions are, I do not think we can avoid them. Would you have wished, say, had you been living in Hitler Germany or the Stalin Soviet Union, to help the child learn the skills, controls included, that would free him into the anxiety-free exercise of cruelty, or give him the controls necessary for his "free" performance as an active authoritarian functionary (a "Führer") or as a plodding Eichmannesque bureaucrat-producer of massive, machined, production-line death? I assume we would not, though I do not think the answer easy especially as you recognize that, in such a situation, your moral decision would surely, if it had been to the contrary, diminish the child's life-chances and immeasurably increase his miseries in at least some

respects. Pushed beyond some incalculable point your moral decision would threaten his very survival. But—and this seems the alternative—if he sought just that comfort and success and adaptation, would you substitute your judgment for his, in effect usurping his life? Or—“democratically”—would you help the child become anything in that wide range from torturer-murderer to violent or non-violent resister-hero? (Would you help him differently at his own election?)

I know the easy answers. That the questions that need answering in those extreme situations do not arise for answer in our quite different circumstances. That the consequences of our actions are not as calculable as answers to the questions would seem to require. That the methods of freeing and controlling that we have are not so powerful that they cannot be largely resisted, and that what therefore turns on our decisions is not much, and hence that our responsibility is but slight. Moreover, since you must compete with parents, peers, and the media, it may be held that your effects and responsibilities are thus even more chancy, dilute, and slight.

Let me concede these arguments for the moment, making the problem as simple as possible, though I may not be able to let the concessions lie for long. Under relatively ideal social and political circumstances, where state, society, and economy are so organized as generally to call out the best in all citizens in the service of a universal, ever-enhancing common good, the problem appears to be simply to foster by the best available methods the child's release at once into that intertwined history and life-history that may even be seen as evolution (in its laudatory sense) if not as the unfolding of the divine in history. The “best available methods” mean those that allow the child as much as possible, as early as possible, to choose as freely as possible among those goods that go as far as possible to extend and expand his range of further freedoms, and, so far as possible, to ensure that the choices made are reviewable and revocable, or renewable. This may well entail, and certainly does not exclude, making commitments; but these, if highly specific, should be readily revocable; and otherwise, if highly general, should be very sure and secure.

The art, as you know, is incredibly complex (and I should add, it doesn't simply apply to small children, it applies to all of us when we attempt to teach each other). It amounts to what I have elsewhere called a partnered “practicum in the pursuit of the good,” part of which consists in exploring, appreciating, finding the highest development of and testing the boundaries of given commitments to goods appropriate for that moment in that person's life at this time in history, and partly in reviewing and revising and altering those commitments as, in the movement of history, and the life-history of each person entailed, what would be best or what can be seen as best, changes and permits or requires new, other, or different commitments. This calls for a tender relationship in which the freeing, liberative

effect is truly, clearly, and effectively dominant, and such controls as are exerted satisfy at least three conditions. First, the controls, to be acceptable, must truly and clearly and effectively serve freedom. Second, they must be overt (open to the child's understanding). And third, they must be non-arbitrary so far as possible (i.e., they should deal in natural consequences rather than structured consequences, whether in terms of reward or punishment).

I now have to begin to revoke the concessions I made above for the sake of clarity. We do not, it is true, even in the United States, have a fascist society, but we do have one that more and more approximates what, over a decade ago, I predicted as most likely to emerge: a silver or velvet fascism, i.e., a state corporatism, centralizing power, radically conservative in the preservation of injustice, seeking to redefine dissent as mere sickness or error or criminality, a state powerfully propagandistic, drastically dedicated to stability and conformity, and so on. It is not yet fascism—but it has also no resemblance to the ideal conditions I assumed for the sake of argument above. Second, the consequences of our actions will be, I think, under the advances in the social and biological sciences, increasingly calculable. Third, we have, or shall shortly have, methods of incredible power. And, fourth, I regret to add, it is precisely those persons charged with liberative and nurturant responsibilities who will be asked, in the name of, or trading upon, their parental or quasi-parental good names, to pioneer the use of these new control devices: parents, doctors, psychiatrists, teachers, probably even baby-sitters, eventually. In fact, in part, that day is already here.

I do not think I am too far ahead of events. A most conservative estimate has it that at least a quarter-million U.S. school children (*some* unknown small proportion of whom *may* have a structural or functional brain disorder, of uncertain nature, origin, or existence) are on virtually forced, virtually permanent drugging (by Ritalin, amphetamines, or otherwise) in order to reduce or eliminate “hyperkinesis,” which is just plain Greek for over-movement or excess motility. That is about one-half of 1% of all U.S. school children. Some doctors, more enthusiastic perhaps than others, “estimate” on the basis of exposure to schools that 5% to 10% of U.S. school children suffer from this strange malady and could profit, or be made to profit, from the appropriate remedy (meaning the *res medica*, the medical thing). In the more scandalous cases, it is widely alleged and sufficiently documented, the drug is prescribed without a medical examination of the child, on a teacher's mere recommendation to a compliant doctor, with or without parental consent, as a condition of the child's remaining in school.

Let me be clear as to what I think the issues here to be. Not being a physician, and the contentions among evidently qualified practitioners being so notable, I will

not attempt to second-guess the existence or non-existence of the alleged MBD (minimum brain damage—or “dysfunction”) condition. From talk with a handful of parents and others, I am convinced that some cases do exist of children behaving so restlessly and disjunctly under almost all life-conditions (from classroom to home to peer play-site) that they can learn little or nothing, it seems, of what others want, and perhaps little even of what they themselves want. I also do not doubt that some of these children are “reversers”—of whose existence in any population we have been aware for a long time—i.e., children who calm under stimulants (at least up to some level), as others show stimulation under sedatives up to some point. I do not doubt, either, the stories that these parents tell of pre-Ritalin misery, and relative post-Ritalin joy, perhaps even for all parties.

Similar panacea-like claims have, of course, been put forward for other medications at different times: opium and laudanum and paregoric as baby-soothers; morphine, and then heroin and now methadone, widely touted each as ideal substitutes for the other; tranquilizers, mood-changers, barbiturates, amphetamines, and the like in recent years. Certainly the almost universally used laudanum, up to about the end of the last century on this whole North American continent, on the baby’s “pacifier” (how aptly named now, though then merely called a “dummy”) produced a blissful smile (even over mild colic or neglect-caused irritability) and then induced sleep and relaxation, as did the same, *mutatis mutandis*, on the gumming-stick—the stick on which Grandma and Grandpa relieved the discomfort in their toothless gums, and drifted away from awareness of their superfluity as souls, their diseconomy as bodies, their fifth-wheel character as family members, in changing socioeconomic structures, practices, hard realities of family life, and soft realities of values or religions. Though society was later to go into a pointless (though produced and profitable) panic over this use of opiates as a ground for fancied “addiction”—and thus, indeed, to lay the groundwork for a great deal of the made-in-America modern problem of addiction—and, though, with reference to Grandma (less so for baby) we could hardly talk of forced medication (as in the Ritalin matter before us), who can doubt that the medicinal comforter (some far cry from any Holy Ghost!) deflected attention from the very real (and remediable) miseries respectively of infancy and old age? Laudanum is a functioning substitute in some sense for attention, for tender loving care, for the costly practices of evoking and nurturing human potential in the one case and preserving, protecting, and truly nursing it toward the end of life in the other. The drug serves—to a degree, with less guilt for the proponent, perhaps—the same purpose as the ancient asylums, which were indeed in one sense places of refuge, in another sense, of course, a way of walling off in far distant localities those whose needs, if fully attended to, would call for either a heavy

tax on our humaneness or a social rearrangement costly to our comfort. So even today, and much more grossly, patently, and immorally, the forced medication of the old, behind the careful blinds and blinders of the “nursing home,” permits us to look away alike from person and problem, deputizing to others a sort of slow psychocide, for which we need feel no immediately represented responsibility.

Let me remind you that in every case the new remedy appears as a proffered substitute for some prior barbarity. It is true to say that the new chemicals “in the mental hospitals,” also largely forced on patients (though the moral issue would still not be clear even if patients “wanted” them), has permitted, in practice, the disappearance of forced physical restraints whether in the form of straitjackets, straps to secure patients motionless to beds or walls, cold-sheet packs, padded cells, or sheer physical brutality of aides (tranquilizers and other “psychotropics” have dispensed with the greater part of that). The same is to a degree true in some places of electroshock or the threat of it, much as portrayed in Kesey’s *One Flew over the Cuckoo’s Nest*. The substitution-for-barbarity, as argument, and the source of the invention in “the helping professions” make almost irresistible the appeal of the proffered innovation. Who would not rather see the “hyperactive” child painlessly sedated, rather than paddled, strapped, expelled, ridiculed, or uselessly yelled at? And what of the human rights and needs of the poor teachers, simultaneously better served, even in better conscience? (Though in what must be one of the high ironies of my lifetime I have just heard that a number of teachers are willing to blow the whistle on the more scandalous aspects of forced school-child chemotherapy, as practiced, if we “liberals” will only return to them the right of unrestricted corporal punishment of children and students.) There is moreover (as with terrorism) with all these methods a tremendous spillover effect, and hence a sort of “economy of violence”: the object-lesson of the chemically subdued (or surgically altered or lobotomized, or electroconvulsively convinced, or, more rarely perhaps, sterilized or castrated or ovariectomized, or hormone injected) “behavior problem person,” or “resister,” or “trouble-maker,” or “problem child,” or “psychopath,” or “sociopath,” or “delinquent,” or “non-learner,” or “hyperkinetic,” or “recidivist” (also very difficult to discriminate)—or now the newly invented “violent person,” who replaces the disappearing “incorrigible” child, or, even worse, the alleged “violence-prone” child, a child who has not yet committed violence but for whom we are supposed to be able to forecast it—or, even worse, “effeminate boy,” or “tom-boy girl”—the object-lesson of the certainty of effect and the futility of resistance is not lost on the learning bystanders. (Only a few need to be in concentration camps, relatively, for a regime to secure “voluntary” not dissimilar compliance from the rest of the population.

For many years, for many patients, the examples of the lobotomized, operated on in the lobotomy-craze of the 1940s and '50s, hung over every ward like a pall—certainly an incentive to conforming conduct, the core of which was the “recognition” and “admission” that the problems lay with the private troubles of the patient and not the public problems of the society or the family.)

Before I leave the problem of “chemotherapy” and the school child—for I want to sketch in some other details of the present and emerging psychotechnology—let me read you a couple of paragraphs from an article by Stephen Chorover, “Big Brother and Psychotechnology” (*Psychology Today*, Vol. 7, No. 5, 1973). (The whole article, by the way, can barely be improved on, for a broad statement of leading problems.)

“The advocates of drug-management often pay lip service to alternate approaches, but generally fail to explore them. But if we let scientific method rather than technical expediency guide our efforts, we would investigate family systems and school environments as well as individual behaviors. Of course this would require serious scientific research and might involve great complexity and expense. And in the end it might turn out that the most reasonable ‘treatment’ would be more freedom or better schools. But as long as our priority remains behavior management, technological approaches will grow stronger.

“We are laying the groundwork in childhood for the psychotechnological control of adults. In my judgment the widespread use of stimulants to control children represents an official form of drug abuse. As the tools grow more powerful, the prospects are vanishing for saving our children and for saving ourselves from this dehumanizing chemical and biological warfare.” (p.52)

The last words are well chosen. We are in part tooling up for waging warfare on our own. We are partly already so engaged. When Chorover says, “We are laying the groundwork in childhood for the psychotechnological control of adults,” he is perhaps too mild on two counts. As to the first, we are already sizably engaged in the psychotechnological control of adults, and there is great interest in refining the effective techniques and expanding their reach. As to the second count, if his holding is right, as I deem it to be, it is not that we will be laying in childhood the groundwork for this kind of control of the adult, but that *adulthood will cease to have meaning*—for all but a few controllers—since the essence of the technology when fully developed is to bypass the developmental process and hence to exclude what we have meant and intrinsically mean by adulthood. *Terminal Man*, in the well-taken part-pun title of a close-to-life novel, is indeed in sight.

Let me all but pass over, though they deserve the most careful treatment, the problems of “behavior modification,” in its euphemistic form retitled “behavior

therapy.” Even—or perhaps particularly—where negative or aversive forms of conditioning are avoided—very considerable ethical and perhaps psychological and certainly social problems remain. By the way, probably at the most harmless end of the continuum, at least one boys’ reform school has, with the consent of the helping professionals there, simply *renamed* (in unconscious gruesome humor) its program of bare-bottom strapping and paddling of the boys “negative aversion therapy.” But even these forms excluded, and even recognizing that in the sophisticated argument of the proponents that “we all engage in behavior modification attempts anyway,” the new situation that arises when our amateur and happily fallible efforts are transmuted into effective and virtually irresistible “reinforcement schedules” presents no small problems for ethics and education, reaching down probably even to the deepest meanings we assign to such key terms as “teaching,” “education,” “nurture,” “care,” and so on.

I want to pass lightly over the problems of “behavior modification”—although that may become the crux in practice for the school or school people—because I want to describe briefly the—to many—exciting promises held by psychosurgery, particularly stereotactic psychosurgery, particularly surgery in and electric stimulation of the hitherto relatively inaccessible but now accessible, deep, or primitive or limbic system of the brain.

The importance of this more deeply buried set of structures, not yet fully, though sufficiently, mapped or understood, is that in its mazes lie probably the potential keys to all the most primitive, hence, in a sense, motivating (i.e., moving, i.e., aggressive or living) activities. Here, where probably lies the deeply moving olfactory center, lie also the centers for anger, rage, hate (probably love), and other more basic functions. Tinkering with its several structures—the amygdala, the hypothalamus—whether by surgery of knife, by cautery, freezing, or other destruction, whether unilateral or bilateral, massive (as in amygdalotomy) or millimetric (as in the destruction of so-called epileptic foci in either or both temporal lobes), produces marked behavioral changes, especially in the direction of docility (in its invidious sense) or manageability.

Gone almost from all respectable hospitals are the massive, messy, qualm-generating brain operations—lobotomies, leucotomies, etc.—of yesteryear, that finally went out of fashion not so much on questions of conscience but with the advent of tranquilizers, energizers, mood-elevators, and depressants. A stereotactic method permits, in lieu of the slash of a crude scalpel, the insertion of a probe or probes, nearly hair-fine, guided with surety and fine-control exactitude, correcting errors of trajectory like a smart-bomb or missile, as they go to a predefined target measured in millimeters and reached with error-tolerances of less than that. No great wounds in the head, no scars: the simple insertion of a relatively

infinitesimal probe or probes (painless except at point of entry, for, of course, the brain has no pain receptors). If the object is the destruction of some millimeters of tissue, the method even permits the temporary suspension of that tissue's activity to check for sure that its inactivation would secure the intended result in altered behavior. The actual destruction of the micro-focus can thus follow confirmation that its elimination would indeed modify the behavior as desired. The fine probes can then be withdrawn, leaving hardly even a cosmetic trace to record the far-reaching intervention into the behavioral repertory of the beneficiary of the operation. Those—or the more conscientious of those who use these methods—mostly claim never to do these microscopic break-ins except where there is temporal-lobe epilepsy associated with episodic seemingly senseless violence. The reports are very bad (even by the lowest scientific standards), but so far there seems to have been above-luck success in extirpating the violence or increasing docility, but little, if any, in dealing with the epilepsy, the alleged medical excuse or justification for the forcible entry. (As with the break-in to Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office, little is got of what the entrants said they came to get, although other consequences ensue.) There are many rumors—and at least one pending lawsuit—of associated permanent degenerations of other functions, but this doubtless can be resolved in time and the described objective even more neatly and surely achieved with perhaps fewer gross side effects.

But in a sense this is not really the fancy technology. The fancy technology—though also still in its infancy—goes far beyond this. Fine probes left in the brain can be caused to do almost anything you may care to have done. Suitably (and simply) arranged, they can be caused to *transmit* effective radio reports of events going on in the brain, or changes of state in particular loci therein, and to receive commands that set off events or alter states in the brain, and, therefore, thoughts, feelings, or actions. Or they can be so connected—like the U.S. and U.S.S.R. missile systems—that a message from one probe will automatically be received by another probe in the same brain, and therefore an event or state at one site ensure another event or state at another site. For example, in principle, a probe signaling the mobilizing of the state preparatory to fight in one part of the brain could be directly connected with a probe that would then immediately set off the state preparatory to flight, thus securing either flight, or, by mutual cancellation, simple inaction. The converse possibility lies not far away (that is, the emergence of a condition signaling flight to be countermanded electronically, the state signaling preparation to fight) so that we may well look forward to the creation of robotic armies of Victoria Cross winners—the impulse to flight, by suitable wiring, having been so arranged as always to trigger a supervening impulse to fight.

But there are even fancier possibilities—and ac-

tualizations—already here in fact, not in the imagination. We can easily do some rather neat things. No fuss, no feathers. Just a tiny portion of hair shaved off to secure a fifty-cent-size “clean field of operation.” Precise stereotactic, constant-approximation-to-exactitude guidance. Plant one electrode, a transmitter; another, a receiver. A few others to react to and transmit information about fluids—fluids that signal sexual arousal, anger, whatever—bathing the relevant brain centers. One more probe, perhaps, an electrode (perhaps several) surrounded by a sheathed massive dose of tranquilizer, the sheath instantly dissoluble on a given signal, telemetrically transmissible by now probably over a fifty-mile radius of control.

At this point in technological development, the distinctions between “self” control, “other” control, or “machine” control hardly matter. Indeed, the terms begin to mean about the same thing. Make the connections in the brain now, and the person is wired for the required performance. End of operation. But maybe you want to leave room, as in the missile dispute, for independent evaluation—by man or computer or both. The transmitter can signal—by telemetry, the same technology that allows us to communicate with the astronauts or the manless Mercury probe—to a computer (or probation officer, or teacher, or mentor, or other “caring” person) over a radius of about fifty miles as much information and such quality of information as is desired. Simplest, of course, is the constant transmission of a signal indicating where exactly the selected person is at every second of every day. (I am reminded, and it's rather ironic, that ten or twelve years ago the notion was pushed forward by Interpol, as a measure for crime control, of simply putting such a signal in every car—so that police would always know where every car-driving person had been at every hour of the day. The plan for doing this involved feeding the information into a sophisticated computer memory plus retrieval system. The proposal was turned down, but barely turned down, as perhaps an invasion of civil liberty. We've come a long way in a decade.) Awake or asleep? Aroused or in alpha-state? Aroused how? Attentive? Braced for battle? Androgen levels rising? (Probably, soon, any state or even nuance of feeling.) The computer, or the monitoring person, or both together, either having the final judgment, can evaluate the situation (“appreciate,” the military call it) and send the signal that releases the tranquilizer—or, in a more fancy variant, trigger other desired actions, feelings, or both. A recent writer who says we are but moments away from a chemistry and neurology that will allow the actor or his teacher (or warden) to trigger or abort almost any feeling, thought, state, or action is more realistic than not.

The image of the “cyborg”—the combined and indivisible cybernetic facility and man as organism—foreseen originally first in science fiction, then in more serious literature, more nearly as man indwelling the

machine, is literally upon us, only more nearly now in reverse or non-distinction.

As the day is already past where a court-imposed condition of release on probation for an "alcoholic" may be an extorted agreement to use the chemical strait-jacket of Antabuse (or, less confining, citrated calcium carbimide), so the day of reporting to a parole officer as a condition may soon bypass volition by requiring simply consent to electrode implantation. Or, as now seems more likely, the still slightly intrusive technique may soon be effective—as may electrical stimulation of any tract or center—by means of a mere surface attachment to be worn as lightly, perhaps, as a hearing aid.

It is already clear that money is being allocated in vast sums for the development and imposition of this technology for what is called the "therapy of undesirable behavior," meaning, commonly, the control of those who resist, and most crucially, those who resist the social controls of the state: prisoners, for instance, who raise the morale of other prisoners by redefining what it means to be a prisoner. (The right in W. I. Thomas's terms to "define the situation" is a crucial prerogative of power, a condition of order, a pillar in the preservation of the *status quo* which is not likely to be relinquished by those who hold the power.) Medicine is developing a vast and increasing interface with the state in the state's function not only as monopolist of violence but also of external and, if possible, internal control.

I am not suggesting that teachers will be asked tomorrow to pick kids for implantation or given the finger on the trigger even if they are so implanted—although be forewarned that in Japan at least, one psychosurgeon has achieved world renown (and is widely acclaimed in "certain circles" in America) for having indeed done just that, or more massive brain surgery, on a large series (hundreds) of children deemed merely hyperkinetic. The results are dramatic. Those kids are not very kinetic in any sense now.

I do think we are not far away from more gentle and perhaps more insidious means, and their associated ethical problems for teachers, the teaching profession, the teachers of teachers, and even those who theorize about the practice and ethics of such things.

Most of the proponents—eager scientists, keen technologists—would push forward as rapidly as possible with the development of the technology. Like the devisers of the atom bomb, they seem wittingly willing to leave a hapless society in possession of techniques it does not yet know how to use and cannot now return to the shelf.

Surely, we need to think—together with others—deeply and carefully *now*. The seconds are precious—and they are running out.

The preceding paper was presented as a talk to the Department of Sociology in Education at OISE in the spring of 1974. This next section is a slightly edited

version of the discussion that followed.

FULLAN: *How would you do your work in coming to Ontario and what would you do here?*

SEELEY: Why Ontario would be a good place to do it is not such a hard question to answer. I have a feeling (perhaps unwarranted) that in this as in many other things Canadians are not quite as "advanced" on several paths of disaster as they are in the United States, particularly in California. More than that, Ontario is subjectively and psychologically my home, and might be expected to nurture my work. Those are two very important answers.

What I would want to do if I came here, or if I could find a base from which I could exert better leverage, would be to encourage and take part in a very wide public debate. I should wish to promote formal debate in the legislatures, but more particularly and important also, debate formally and informally among everyday people, and especially among those most likely to be the "beneficiaries" of such treatments as I have described. I would like to encourage a series of discussions, a mutual educational process, with and between teachers, children, policy-makers, and others, especially those who do not have a vested interest in the sense that this is their toy, the heart of their life—all over the province and at every age and with both sexes, and especially with minorities and those sub-populations who here, as in the United States, are likeliest to become the first principal "beneficiaries" of these methods.

So I think we have things to find out and I think we have a great discussion to conduct, which is itself an educational discussion.

My interest extends further than that, so that apart from anything else I might want to do here, I should like to think through very carefully (again, with others) in a systematic and orderly way, both in the academy and in the field, with the parties chiefly concerned (teachers, children, parents, and others), what are the problems today of what one might broadly call the defense of children.

Twenty or thirty years ago I think it was reasonable to believe we knew how to do that. I think we made an effort, and I think we had some success in communicating certain kinds of information to children that allowed them in some degree to defend themselves against certain obvious kinds of propaganda, certain ways of being taken in, certain ways of being molded. These teachings were obviously not sufficient, because in the '60s nothing was so prominent as the realization among the generation then emerging into adulthood of just how much they had nevertheless been molded, and how difficult it was belatedly to break those molds and to try to discover even residual elements of a living self.

This whole question is reopened urgently: the question as to how, without destroying the child's docility in the laudable sense (that is, his teachability in the sense

in which he is teachable in his own interest), to keep him from becoming docile in the pejorative sense. How can we help him be non-passive, not putty in anybody's hands, whether ours (good as we may be), or those of his favorite newspaper, comic or TV program? This seems to me to be a question for the age and one that is becoming ever more complex and ever more crucial. I would be very seriously interested in pursuing the set of ethical and practical and theoretical questions associated with that concern.

EFFRAT: *Picking up on that a bit, I wonder if you would go a bit further into a positive statement as to how you would solve the dilemma of, say, freedom and control or controlling to enhance self-control.*

SEELEY: I really don't know any easy and immediate answers, and in a sense a great part of the reason for coming would be to find associates and a proper field to pursue answers to these questions. In one sense I think we know the answers, and in another sense I think we don't. I think that in this as in many other matters—as in, for instance, trying to answer a question as to what do you really mean by loving a person—we do in some sense know intuitively more than we are able adequately to formulate verbally. In fact, when we formulate we can see how inadequate any formulation is. The formulation *reaches for* but misses what we actually do quite frequently and sometimes quite well when we are at our best. I think most of us have had experiences, sometimes very deep experiences, and sometimes over very long periods, of liberating children—whether in our professions as teachers or in our private lives as parents. There is a sense in which I am confident that we practice better than we describe a successful art in which you can see a child come into ever wider and greater possession of those controls that he needs in order to direct himself in terms of an end-in-view that is progressively more and more deeply and genuinely his own.

I don't think it is sufficient—particularly under the growing desire for control, the increasing reach of the state, and the developing technology—to leave it there, and I think we must begin to make more explicit what it is we are doing well as liberators (if that is what we are) when we succeed; and what it is that we or others are doing when we fail and the controllers succeed.

That task, I think, requires a very sophisticated examination that reaches at one level into very deep introspection, very sophisticated self-observation, even of not readily available materials in our own minds, whether to be reached by free association or whether to be reached by watching ourselves in hypnagogic states, going to sleep or waking up. (In such states you may see for yourself in your mind what you ordinarily don't see.) We can also learn from third-party observation of successful practitioners “in the field,” whether parents or teachers. In many cases, a lot of the work that has to be done is just the hard work of clarifying exactly what it is we mean by what we say every day in folk

terms. So a great deal of work is philosophic and semantic: simple clarification of what we mean when we say certain things.

The other part of the task is discovery: whether psychological and within oneself, or psychological and in some other person; whether sociological—in observation of behavior—of what it is to liberate and particularly what it is to procure that best state (leaving it open to anyone to argue that it isn't a good state) in which one can be truly and passionately committed to some good that one is trying to achieve at a given moment with all one's characterological and other powers, while yet being sufficiently flexible that those commitments can be reviewed and changed as the very development in one's self and in history that that commitment has set in motion necessitates such a review and either a recommitment or new commitment. It's still badly stated, but I think that is what we aim at, and in many ways we do it.

I think the notion needs expansion, definition at micro and macro levels; it needs definition for the person and for groups, if not for the society. I'm convinced it's not beyond possibility because I am convinced that we have, in fact, done it sometimes—sometimes for long times. But I think in a sense it is, in the sense of the medieval cartographer, *terra incognita*: that is, you have some rough idea that Greenland is out there and something else is out there, but you really haven't mapped the territory at all, and you sail in it at your peril. I would like to increase the mapping and reduce the peril.

EGIT: *How is it that we feel revulsion at what you are suggesting when we too are products of the same system that produced the people that are doing the things you were telling us about? If you read this to a very different audience, their reaction would be different—I would suspect that they would say, “Hey, that's really good; keep down violence!” Are we not assuming that White Man's Burden—discussing what's good for them? Another side of the coin?*

SEELEY: My only reply to that, and it's only partial, is that what I've said is open to that charge. Central to my last few remarks was the statement that I thought it indispensable to engage in debate both in the legislatures, where the onlooker is every reader, and with all the people concerned and in particular with those—the voiceless, the faceless, the great minorities in any of the senses of that word—who are most likely to be the first beneficiaries or victims of the technologies I described. So really I had said that I would take my guidance from there.

I ought to add (in fact, I think I did add) that it is exactly that which seems to be the cause of the most violent vituperation by the proponents of these control schemes: it is anathema to them to propose that anything like community control committees or community advisory committees should exist, or community debate should take place. In one instance, I made a statement that I thought had the most innocent liberal ring when a

proponent was seeking to defend what he was going to do (at a presentation at U.C.L.A. Law School), when I said, "Well if nothing comes of all this in the sense of a new setup for developing these schemes at this university, which might be the happiest outcome, I would be satisfied if it encouraged a university-wide debate of the issues and some understanding of going beyond the helper technology or the low level technology by which (I'll put it modestly) we try to control each other." And again, even here, the level of the polemics was so exceedingly low that the idea of widespread debate was roundly rejected by the principal proponent, though in order to reject it and still maintain his liberal image he had to falsify what I'd said into saying that what I was proposing was that there should be no advance on any front of any kind until everybody at the university was satisfied on every point! Well, of course, when you state an argument in that extreme form—it's ridiculous. I merely asked that we make such debate central as a goal, and indeed be satisfied if we could engage the whole University in deep and soul-searching debate—and I don't mean by the whole University just the faculty—I mean *everyone* who is there, whether labeled worker, student, or faculty. In such a discussion we could hope to learn a great deal about seen and unforeseen dangers. That would be a sufficient educational outcome. But even this mild suggestion was regarded as treachery to the higher wisdom of control of the wise over the unwise, i.e., the technologists over the to-be-technologized.

KOVALOFF: *It seems to me that the problem of freedom and control is as much a problem of the administered person as it is of the free soul. It also seems to be a problem with those of us who write that kind of title down and create that kind of interpretation. And how would I come to know that I am being administered? That I'm being engineered? And if that were possible, then what could I do about it? I'm suggesting that our interpretations of the world may not always be as we see them to be.*

SEELEY: Well, the last point seems incontrovertible. We cannot exist, except perhaps in a constantly drugged state, without laying on interpretations. In fact, it's very hard to believe, from my viewpoint, that facts free of interpretations exist at all; the facts emerge from schemes of interpretation that we already have, schemes that are either private to us, individually, personally, or that we share as professionals or people of a certain sex or age group, or that are near-universals at a given time or over Western civilization. I don't think we can avoid the problem of interpretation and I don't think we can avoid the risk of error.

I think one way to minimize the risk of error—but again it cannot be pushed too far because like most of the truths of life I think it is indeed paradoxical—is to compare one's interpretation with the interpretations of a great number of people over a wide variety of ex-

periences, above all a wide variety of social situations in life. That way, at least you may take account of and to a degree allow for problems posed for anyone familiar with the sociology of knowledge. I must say that that is not a panacea either, because in almost any matter of moment it's nearly always true that the majority is always wrong. The majority is *bound to be wrong* on the theory of relativity at some point, for instance, because at some point only one man has thought of it, and he cannot even convince his ten best surrounding colleagues. So the matter of trying to get validation and confirmation from others may be a necessary but is certainly not a sufficient condition for being right. You may have such great confidence in your insight, or in the methods by which you reach a conclusion, that you hold out, with justification, against almost universal disapprobation and say, "It isn't so; the world is not flat, not the way you all think it is."

Part of your question was how do I know when I am being administered, and what can I do or should I do to resist? That is very difficult indeed, because what I meant by administration in this connection is that kind of scheme of dealing with you in which, while you are being governed, the principle that is being sold to you is that there are only "administrative decisions." I think it is notable that in many jurisdictions the government is spoken of as "the Administration." The government of almost every university, for instance—that is, the power group, the regents or governors with the president and his officers—like to speak of themselves as "the Administration." But in fact they are the *governors*, in the same sense that any colonial governor ever was for any colony. There may be hedgings here and there, and a few things that they can't do, but they are literally in any intelligible sense governors. They are not administrators. What they want to appear to be is people who make certain rational decisions, given certain situations or certain rules which for some reason can't be changed. When asked why they can't be changed, they respond, "Well, that's policy." That is an administrative answer; they don't furnish an argument. The essence of such administration is to obscure for you the fact that you are being governed, while the process is made to look like mere administration.

A tiny example taken from long ago, I think mentioned in *Crestwood Heights*, was an all too visible policy at that time in the kindergarten. I don't know whether it's long gone, but it was then thought very advanced. If a kindergarten child would not do what was expected of him (though the people were very kind, the limits fairly wide), would not put away all the toys, stop playing with the toys and come join the nap or the singing and dancing or whatever—if a child would not do that, instead of being punished or instead of being allowed to recognize that what he was engaged in was a struggle of wills with the teacher (whether for its own good or whatever), the rationalization actually mediated

to the child was a deceit. The child's teacher, with the kindest face and most demure manner in the world, the teacher would bend down, take the child into her arms, and say, "Look, I would like to put you in the other room, where it's nice and quiet, for a little while, and then when you can manage yourself again, come back and join us." The child was led to believe that the problem was a problem in self-administration, a problem that *he* had; and the fact that there was a struggle and a conflict of wills was being *deliberately* obscured for him. The method was deeply effective. So much so, in fact, that when we came to analyze the dreams of Crestwood Heights children, and to compare them with the dreams and fantasies of Freudian patients, or even patients of their parents' generation, here, these children who had been so administered had even in their dreams, in place of focused figures of fear or hate or substitutes for them (you know, ogres or dangerous people, wicked stepmothers), instead of that kind of dream-figure they had dreams accompanied by fear states whose most notable characteristic was their diffuseness. They could not tell what it was in the nightmare that they feared. Indeed there was no he, she, or it, but only a "they"—always in a situation gray, hazy, and vague—not sharp, pointed, and focused. A whole lot of things in the deep psyche, as reflected in the material that was gathered in the clinic (which we also operated there), were very different when properly examined from anything I'd heard or seen reported from the child guidance clinics of the generation before.

So since the object of administering you is to avoid your recognizing that anything is being done except in terms of rationality and your own best interests—or the best interests of the collectivity—learning how to probe past it is partly a matter of learning how to use certain critical tools that can be delivered to you in an intellectual sense, though accompanying them I think is needed a praxis in which assertions (especially assertions like: "This bad medicine is good and I give it to you only because I love you") can be brought continuously under constant, careful, and very critical review. Especially when you make them yourself.

NOLLE: *Recently we had a meeting in which we discussed grading systems, which I think would constitute one of your control mechanisms. I see our future here concerned with certification; I see us increasingly being asked to do contract research. How does one articulate himself with that environment that is increasingly oriented to greater control—more concerned with who shall get the grants and how? How can liberated people work within the system? How can you work at this Institute, given your ideals?*

SEELEY: I think that's a fair and proper question. Just picking up on a minor element of it, I was talking to Dr. Harvey in the few minutes we had before we came in, about research contracts, particularly in the field of education as one other and very major and very grim

signal of a kind of depth of political control that is intended only as a springboard to ever greater state intrusion and control. Imagine contracts, not in the field of education, but given by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration under the Crime in the Streets Bill! You can just imagine what those contracts look like. In fact, the grantor's staff talks about monitoring those contracts by daily visits if necessary, and breathing down the contractor's neck. So there is just no question about the intended control, or the intent to make that part of a pyramid of control in which even the small latitudes and freedoms that we have had in the past will be at least at risk, if not permanently foregone.

You also asked a more difficult question—you asked how could a person with views like these work in an institution like this? The second question is easier because I know less about the characteristics of this institution than you do, or how much latitude it permits. But let me answer the question in its generality first because what I have to say in general has to be true in particular.

The brutal answer is that no institution exists or exists long, in my opinion, that does not preclude the serious, sustained, or successful pursuit of such liberative aims. They may let you speak—like a court jester, speak your joke and let it pass—but a serious enterprise to understand and, as Marx said, not just to understand but in understanding to change the world, is regarded as a hostile enterprise by almost any institution, even institutions that claim that very aim as their objective.

What people do who have such aims, and that probably means everybody in the room here, is live a life that is partly bastardized and partly pays a tax in endless pain. That is, you make sorties, and as a consequence you have one joint of one finger chopped off, whatever that may mean in terms of your career or your hopes or whatever. You do this and at some point your effort is aborted and yet it has carried us some small way toward dignity and freedom.

There are, perhaps, two other things I can say, that I have to say. First, it is probably impossible at the present time to do anything effective outside institutions; and, second, there is something that in the best of them, at least for short periods of time, leaves some sort of interstitial space, so that you can make some advance; and it is only on the basis of those advances that you can seriously hope for or think of organizing something new that is again more libertarian.

The extra-institutional alternative has its own weaknesses: people whom I greatly admire who have chosen at least for themselves to live at subsistence levels in alternative institutions, avoiding questions of certification except by mutual validation, also have their influence truncated, cut off, in fact find themselves driven into compromises which detract to a painful degree also from the nobility and purity of their souls. So that whether we choose to try to work *out from* these institutions, or in from those non-institutions or counter-

institutions, the taxes in self-contradiction, in diminished integrity, in literal amputation of spontaneity, joy in life, of all kinds of things, those will be exacted at either of those two poles—and in the middle.

Let me mention Paulo Freire, a dear friend. I do not think, from my conversations with him, that he felt any less hampered when he was in direct communication with his peasants, directly perfecting his method, than he now feels in Geneva. That is, the constraints are simply different, but still constraints. Of course, there is a risk that one is “captured” by the institutions, or captured by the life-style or “embourgeoisied,” or whatever. Nevertheless, Paulo Freire now transmits in a way that he could not otherwise do—because he has air fare at his command and a whole lot of things—he transmits far and wide his methods, concerns, and liberative techniques, and in fact still achieves direct liberation by direct face-to-face education in the best sense. You cannot be in his presence without feeling that something has been released in you. He does that which he could not have done on his peasant soil, in teaching literacy and in so doing teaching peasants to understand the conditions of their life in such fashion that they could begin to resist them. *Either way he is hampered.*

I don't know how to answer your question satisfactorily because the true answer is, I think, that life will shape you, wound you, cut you down to size in different ways, almost no matter where you locate, and the question then is really one of strategy or, as I put it earlier, it is a quite particular question to which I can't return a general answer, because again it depends on the intercept of *your* life-history, your personal life-history, with what history, meaning what social development, demands at the moment. So you have to answer partly in terms of “What am I?” and “What can I do?” and partly in terms of “What does the moment require?” There has to be a joint answer; otherwise it's probably a wrong answer.

NOLLE: *I know why there are a lot of cynics in the world and why there's a lot of concern about power, because at least one response is to learn to play the game to ensure survival and through survival you may make some changes in the rules of the game.*

SEELEY: Well, “playing the game” conceals as much as it clarifies. I spoke of interstitial possibilities, but they too can be used in a playing of the game that supports what I will call for the moment worst in whatever institution or situation you are working for. But there is also a “playing of the game” which consists in meeting the minimum requirements of what is worst and exploiting, with every skill and sensitivity you have, the best. Any teacher teaching in any school is situated thus, whether the school is good or bad. There are certain things that he or she must do or cease teaching. There is invariably some latitude, and the human weighing—it's a moral weighing—has to be made between those who within their capacities use those latitudes ill or well, whether

they use them to close freedom and to close life, or whether they use them within that concrete situation to open it, besides concerning themselves with trying to alter the structure itself. So “playing the game” can mean taking on everything including the attitudes that, say, a stereotyped coach wants to foist on you and looking at the world that way, or it can mean just going out and doing the minimum that is required to keep you on the team if that liberates you to create a different kind of world. But I know of no escape, even in the monastery or in contemplation, from the formal aspects of that dilemma.

SILVERS: *I want to ask about another dimension of the element of looking at the possibilities. Referring to the quote from Psychology Today, you suggested that there should be an exploration to look for possibilities in science and technology. However, when you answered some of the questions concerning what should be done, you talked more in terms of an activism to raise the level of consciousness in the field—for example, in the legislature, with parents, and with children. I was wondering whether the answer you gave was what you saw as the fuller answer that the author was giving or meant to give in Psychology Today, or whether there was an additional part of the enterprise. Many of the possibilities that have been actuated in the technology were founded in the very enterprise of science; but if we return back to that enterprise to search for other possibilities, why do we necessarily come up with possibilities which are releasing? I suppose this is sort of a cynical view of the enterprise: while we may have a gut-level reaction to some of the horrors that take place in the society at the point that we begin to get into what we have to offer to the society, then we begin to move away from these feelings as they are—we transform and convert them in our own enterprise of science, because of the demands we put upon this enterprise in, say, attempting to be systematic and critical. I'm wondering whether there is a way out necessarily through the venture of science. What do you see as the kind of activity that one engages in to explore these other possibilities?*

SEELEY: I think it's a well-taken point. I think Chorover, the author, in pleading for the superordination of science to technology has chosen terms that are commonly accepted but that I for other reasons would wish to reject, though an answer as to why I would wish to reject them is a rather lengthy answer. Let me take the first point first.

I think it is clear from what he places in opposition to science that he would then make us “look at the larger systems.” Even that, I think, is a mistaken way of looking at the problem. I do not understand the sense in which when you examine it critically the family or the society is a “larger system”; indeed I doubt whether the word “system” really applies. If you deflect your attention from the terms he has chosen—that is, science over technology—what he is really pointing out is that by

tinkering with neurology and the fascinating prospects of these new toys, you're losing the important understanding that what he calls science would reveal to you. He asks, that is, whether a great many of the troubles can be cured in the individual, or whether they must and *always* will be there as long as the "larger systems"—the family and society—are as they are.

Now, I sense there is another and much deeper element in your question, and that you are asking me whether I too hope that what he calls "science" will release us from these threats or these bonds or whether instead I have appeared to point for hope to things like discussion, and indeed something that sounded almost like activism. That requires a much more careful and profound answer. It is indeed true that I would wish to promote certain kinds of careful and orderly, and in that sense systematic and critically evaluated, "observations in the field." *But the conditions under which I would endorse such an enterprise* themselves require fine discrimination and lengthy treatment. There are many such enterprises which I regard as illegitimate, more analogic to spying than to the kind of enterprise that I think is humane and liberative. The whole question of what is and what is not permissible in research is involved there.

I do not, however, like the term "sciences" (again for reasons I have stated in hundreds of pages of writing) applied to social affairs at all, because I think it is misleading on a great number of counts. It is misleading as to degrees of certitude. It is misleading in that it is ordinarily impossible to avoid altering the object reported upon in making the report on it, which is not ordinarily, except at one extreme in microphysics, a problem for science. There are many other reasons why I don't regard it advisable to call the orderly, careful study of human affairs "science." Moreover, regardless of what we call them, I do not regard such studies as even permissible unless they have a melioristic intent *and* a reasonable probability of securing a human good that will clearly outweigh any harm they might do. It is no more legitimate, in my view, to do research upon someone or something else and report it to you, without sufficient ethical reason, more or less clearly defined, than it would be to ask a child random questions that could readily be disturbing, and then to publish the results with or without naming the child, but even naming the class of children, so that when they next want to engage in some struggle with you they are hampered or harmed or their freedom is in some way diminished. So I am reluctant to use Chorover's term "science" for what nevertheless I would like us to do: that is, to pay adequate weight, as he suggests, to circumstances of family and school and the political economy and the ideology and the culture and the set of assumptions and even the language in terms of which we perceive those things, those invisible constraints—those are things I agree with him on. His use of the word science is not one I would

have used in this connection.

LIVINGSTONE: *Do you think you could focus more specifically on learning environments per se and specifically on children? I wonder if you could give your personal views on how their natural critical abilities could be encouraged in such environments against technology.*

SEELEY: I don't think I know the answer to your question, except in a very crude, elementary, and preliminary way. In that way I can't doubt that you know the answer already. The most substantial part of the liberative enterprise that I understand at all consists in encouraging the critical abilities of the child; which also means, up to the degree that you are able to, removing the penalties for his use of that critical ability, whether or not those penalties exist only in his mind or whether they are externally imposed whenever he begins to act in the light of what his critical vision reveals. In many cases, your aid consists in the nurturance so far as possible of the child's critical ability, of the knowledge on which that depends, of the skills of unmasking, and in the effective exposure of pseudo-authority whether that is embodied in the textbook, the teacher, the newspaper, the government pronouncement, or whatever it may be.

And the method also consists (I'm sorry to say, because it complicates the problem) in not only loving that child sufficiently so that your warmth supports the strength which is required for him to be critical at all, but loving him in the proper sense of loving, which means sufficiently intelligently to be of help to him. And that means, in turn, that you have to have loved the child well enough really to know and understand him as a particular person. It cannot be a vague, floating warmth or sentimentality. To encourage the child to go beyond his capacity at a given moment, to go seriously, dangerously beyond it, is at least as bad as not to encourage him to live adequately up to it. But to guard against both requires "intelligence" about the child, as well as general intelligence. That kind of "intelligence" about that particular child is not to be had out of psychometric tests or certainly not out of those alone. It can be had only out of a loving engagement, an in-depth alliance which is in effect (and I hate to say this, because again it makes terrible demands on any of us) an approximation to a good marriage, that is, to a mutually nurturant system between a pair of people—a teacher and pupil. It's a frightening doctrine, because it may mean that you can only teach a very few people at most in a term or a year or perhaps in a lifetime.